(c) what short-term and long-term steps are being initiated so that we have adequate number of trained Indian pilots; and

(d) the anticipated time-frame when all the trained foreign pilots of scheduled carriers would be finally repatriated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Civil aviation industry in the country is facing a shortage of type rated pilots. In order to bridge the gap between the demand and availability of pilots, 944 foreign pilots have been engaged by various scheduled airline operators.

(c) The Government has taken various steps to reduce the gap between demand and supply of skilled Indian pilots. These include conditionally increasing the age-limit to 65 years for pilots, upgradation and modernization of training infrastructure of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) to enhance its training capacity from 40 to 100 pilots per year, setting up of a world class flying training institute at Gondia, Maharashtra for training 100 cadets and assistance to flying clubs by allocating trainer aircraft through Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)/Aero Club of India.

(d) DGCA has advised all scheduled, non scheduled and general aviation operators to submit their plan to phase out foreign pilots and replace them by trained Indian pilots rated in the aircraft operated by them. As per the plan submitted by the operators, all the foreign pilots are likely to be repatriated in approximately five years time.

License for international flights

2335. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of private airlines given licenses to operate on international routes, route-wise and frequency-wise;

(b) the basis on which such licenses are awarded; and

(c) the commercial and operational obligations of such airlines flying on international routes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) At present, only two Private Scheduled airlines *viz.* Jet Airways and JetLite (erstwhile Air Sahara) are operating scheduled international operations. Jet Airways is operating daily services on Mumbai-Bahrain, Cochin-Bahrain, Kolkata-Dhaka, Mumbai-Brussels-New York, Delhi-Brussels-New York, Chennai-Brussels-Toronto, Delhi-Kuwait, Cochin-Kuwait, Chennai-Kaula Lumpur, Cochin-Muscat, Calicut-Muscat, Mumbai-Doha, Calicut-Doha, Mumbai-Singapore, Delhi-Singapore, Chennai-Singapore, Chennai-Colombo, Delhi-Bangkok, Kolkata-Bangkok, Delhi-London, Amritsar-London and Mumbai-Hong Kong sectors. Further, Jet Airways is operating 4 services per week on Delhi-Dhaka, 12 services per week on Delhi-Kathmandu and 14 services per week on Mumbai-London sectors. On the other hand, JetLite is operating daily services on Delhi-Kathmandu and Chennai-Colombo sectors.

(b) As per the current Government policy, Indian scheduled carriers having continuous operations of 5 years in the domestic sector and having a minimum fleet size of 20 aircraft are eligible to operate on international routes. Both Jet Airways and JetLite fulfill this eligibility criteria to operate on international routes.

(c) Scheduled airlines operating international air services have to comply with the rules and regulations of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and country of operation with regard to operations, safety, sec rity and related issues.

Accident at Nagpur Airport

2336. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that more than hundred of passengers abroad Indigo's Pune-Delhi flight (6E 136) had a providential escape when the flight encountered a deer on the runway on the 7th March, 2008 at Nagpur Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a few months ago, this airport which is being developed into an International Air Passengers and Cargo hub, had witnessed a similar incident; and

(d) if so, the action Government has taken to ensure the safety of passengers at Nagpur Airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On 07.03.2008, Airbus A 320 of M/s Indigo Airlines operating as Flight Number 6 E 136 had an encounter with a deer on intersection of runway. There was no injury to any passenger and flight was continued safely to destination aerodrome.

(c) Yes, Sir. On 30.12.2007, Air India Express AXB 252 Nagpur-Mumbai flight after departure reported animal hit on runway number 32. After inspection on the runway body pieces of dead boar were found on the runway.

(d) To avoid recurrence of such incidents various steps such as frequent runway inspections before each landing and departure of aircraft, removal of wild growth and bushes all over the aerodrome operational area, stoppage of leakage of water pipe in the operational area (which could have been a source of water to animals), installation of zone guns to scare away animals, installation of reflecting ribbons etc. have been taken.

Expansion on runways

2337. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has taken a decision to expand the runways of several airports in the country during the next two financial years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, airport-wise and the expenditure expected to be incurred, airport-wise;

(c) whether the State Governments have agreed to provide extra land for the expansion of the runways;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when the expansion of runways is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.